

The Goose Creek Scenic River Advisory Committee

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Minutes of the July 14, 2010 Meeting
Loudoun County Government Building
Purcellville Room
1 Harrison Street, Leesburg, Virginia 20175

Loudoun Members Present: Chairman Mark Peterson, Vice Chairman John Isom, Helen E. Casey, Stephen Combs-Lafleur, Joan Rokus, Anne D. Larson, Liaison to Catoctin Creek

Loudoun Members Absent: Lynn Gibson; Kurt Erickson, Legislative Advisor; Benjamin Lawrence; Phil Daley

County Staff Present: David Ward, Department of Building & Development; Patrick Ryan, Economic Development; Marie Genovese, Planning Department

Guests: Tara Linhardt, Taylorstown Community Association; Karen Hendershot, Taylorstown Community Association; Ruth Cheronis, Catoctin Creek; Petey Herndon, Luck Stone; Don Owen, Land Trust of Virginia; Karl Mohle, NVRPA; Chris Van Vlack, LSWCD; Patti Psaris, Waterford Foundation/Catoctin; Olivia Sullivan; Otto Gutenson, Catoctin Citizen

Chairman's Business

Chairman Mark Peterson officially called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm

First order of business was to approve the May 12, 2010 minutes. Motion to approve minutes was made by Helen Casey and seconded by John Isom. The minutes were approved unanimously. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 15th, at 1:00 p.m. in the Purcellville Room on the 1st Floor of the Loudoun County Government Building at 1 Harrison Street, Leesburg, Virginia. Chairman Peterson announced that he would like to move the meeting time from the second Wednesday of the month to the third Wednesday of the month from now on due to a scheduling conflict.

Watershed Awareness Day

Chairman Peterson announced Watershed Awareness Day will be held at Sky Meadows State Park on August 14th if anyone from the Committee would like to attend. He also asked if the Committee had an interest in doing a display. Joan Rokus stated she planned on attending and could hand out brochures. The display

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that Anne Larson made for the Committee could also be used. Anne Larson will update the display and will also bring her Catoctin Creek display.

Catoctin Creek

Anne Larson stated Dick Gibbons expressed interest in re-establishing the Catoctin Creek Scenic River Advisory Committee and extending the scenic river status. The former Catoctin Creek Scenic River Advisory Board was abolished in 2003 due to inactivity. Ms. Larson provided that while the Committee is inactive citizens are still active in that area.

To reestablish a Committee, five members, one of which needs to be a chairperson, will need to be nominated by the Commonwealth of VA. Dick Gibbons is currently researching the bylaws. Ms. Larson approximates that it would take one year to get the Committee together and another year to have the scenic river status extended. Her understanding is that the extension would need to be mapped and a percentage of the property owners along the Creek would have to agree to the scenic river status. Scenic river status cannot be extended less than 5 miles. Any conservation easements along the Creek will make it easier to extend the scenic river status beyond Waterford. Patrick Ryan from Economic Development is currently helping her with the mapping of these easements.

Ms. Larson stated that Nancy Beaver would like to have the next Catoctin Creek meeting at her house on the South Fork of Catoctin Creek. Ms. Larson handed out a theme song for the Catoctin Creek.

Ms. Larson discussed impacts to Catoctin Creek from development in Purcellville and trees damming the Creek near Taylorstown at the Taylorstown Road Bridge. Ms. Larson passed around pictures showing the trees in the Creek. The trees will be removed this Friday, July 16th. The Friends of Catoctin Creek will bear some of the expense of removing the trees.

Open Space and Conservation Easements

Patrick Ryan from Economic Development discussed the open space land use program. He provided that the Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on September 13, 2010 to consider increasing the qualifying acreage for the Open Space category for properties within an Agricultural and Forestal District from 5 to 20 acres. Currently properties may qualify for the open space classification if they meet the criteria for historic resource protection, scenic resource protection, protection of

farmland for future agricultural use, or achievement of comprehensive planning and community development goals.

Don Owen, Land Trust of Virginia provided the Land Trust of Virginia is only concerned with two criteria for conservation easements: (1) the property contains truly significant conservation values and (2) the property owner promises to protect the resource. While the Land Trust prefers larger parcels, the size of the property is not a factor; approximately 2/3 of the conservation easements held by the Land Trust are less than 100 acres. The Land Trust's most recent easement was 496 acres near Hillsboro. He stated that most of their easements are in northern and western Loudoun County and northern Fauquier County. He also stated that approximately 30% of western Loudoun and approximately 34% of northern Fauquier are within conservation easements. While the older easements did not always account for riparian protection, it is included in all of the newer easements.

Property owners donate easements to the Land Trust and in return get tax benefits for their donation. Tax credits are tied to when the easement is conveyed and may be sold. Mr. Owen showed the Committee mapping his office has done with regards to conservation easements along the Goose Creek as well as mapped properties along or near the Creek. He stated that he would provide Chairman Peterson with a copy of all conservation easements along the Goose Creek. He provided that the Land Trust could do a similar study for Catoctin Creek and that it would take approximately 4 to 6 weeks. Patrick Ryan, Economic Development, stated that he could use County GIS data to map conservation easements along Catoctin Creek as well as all identify property owners along the Creek.

Mr. Owen stated he made a presentation in Waterford showing citizens the unique resources in their community and stated that he could do a similar presentation for Catoctin Creek.

Anne Larson asked what the incentives would be for a property owner along Catoctin Creek if the scenic river status was extended.

Brochure Update

The Committee discussed updates to the brochure. David Ward, Building and Development stated that he would be happy to make changes to the brochure, but that the Committee would have to come up with printing and mailing costs if applicable. Helen Casey stated that the old Goose Creek Scenic River Advisory Board brochure also needs to be updated. The Committee revised the fourth bullet under "Benefits of Scenic Designation in the program" to read "Allows for project review and monitoring of designated river segments by state-appointed Virginia

Scenic River Advisory Committees". The Committee also discussed changing the wording of the first paragraph under "Goose Creek Scenic River Advisory Committee". David Ward stated he would revise the first paragraph and get it back to the Committee to review at the September 15th meeting.

Committee Business

The Committee discussed removal efforts regarding the large culvert pipes in the Goose Creek, between the Route 7 and Riverside Parkway bridges and how it would be difficult to use equipment to remove the pipes due to impacts. Petey Herndon from Luck Stone has come up with a plan to remove the pipes. The plan involves using ATVs along the existing canoe trail to remove the pipes. The pipes will be cut in ½ or more and using a chain to wrap around the pipes they can then be rolled up the bank with very little impact. Mr. Herndon provided that one pipe is full of mud and leaves that will need to be shoveled out before it can be removed. The water in the Creek, where the culvert pipes are located is only about waist deep currently. Mr. Herndon stated that it would be ideal to remove the pipes when the water is lower. Helen Casey stated that she would like to have some publicity surrounding the removal of the culvert pipes. Joan Rokus also stated that the Board of Supervisors should be made aware of the efforts and that there are other areas of the Creek that need attention with regards to trash removal. Mr. Herndon provided that they plan on taking pictures of the removal efforts and that they plan to remove other items of trash at the time they remove the culvert pipes. Chairman Peterson will e-mail the Committee to let them know when the culvert pipes will be removed.

Chairman Peterson stated that the Committee will be updated on the Luck Stone and Loudoun Water applications at the September 15th meeting.

There being no further Committee business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marie Genovese, Planning Department
Secretary Pro Tem